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SCIENCE CAN NEVER GET IN ADVANCE OF REVELATION.

EVEN the Infidel must acknowledge the Bible to be a very old book. It was written very long before there were any steam-boats, or steam-carriages, or gas lights, or telescopes, or glass, or gunpowder; it was written long, long before the improvement and refinement of this nineteenth century, so much boasted of, were ever heard of; it was written for the whole world, by men, the most of whom had travelled a very short way from their own door, and it was written for all succeeding ages of the world, by men who had no notion what marvellous changes would be going on, while they would be lying in their graves. Is it not strange, then, that these men, possessing so little geographical knowledge, should be able to write a book of directions for all the world, which should fit all the world? Is it not strange, that in ages of comparative ignorance, before even the morning of science had become anyhow clear, these same men should write a book of directions for the whole generations of men, till the end of time; and that every rising generation should find that the directions exactly fit them? Yes, indeed, it is so strange, that there is only one way of accounting for it, agreeably either to philosophy or religion; and it is this—God taught these men.

The Bible is by no means scanty in its references to facts in the history of nations, facts in philosophy, facts in the manners and customs of men. This was a dangerous field, had not every thing been perfectly honest and secure. What blundering has been discovered, even in the very best ancient histories; what ignorance have even the greatest of ancient philosophers betrayed. Job and David lived long before any thing was known of the Copernican system of astronomy. Let them beware, therefore, how they write about astronomy, else modern infidels will laugh at their ignorance. Ah! but they have talked about astronomy, and talked so well, too, that all the discoveries which have been made since their time, have

not been able to point out a single flaw in the expressions which they have used. How is this? Did the great Ptolemy with all his powers talk thus of astronomy? The merest tyro now, could *prove* to Ptolemy that he was all wrong; and that while he imagined that he was writing philosophy, he was only writing nonsense. Yes, but the greatest philosopher could not tell David or Job so, however willing he might be to do it. And though philosophy should run on in the race of improvement for millions of years, she will never get in advance of the Bible. The Bible takes for granted all the philosophy which men will ever learn; and after the last philosopher has made his last discovery, he will be humbled, to find that the author of Revelation in old Job or Moses' time, knew it a great deal better than he.

Questions, too, on which philosophy has raised an immensity of discussion, and about which she has very long puzzled herself in vain, the Bible either settles in its own quiet way, perhaps by a single word; or else gives, it may be, in half a sentence, just all the information that man will ever receive in this world, or all that his limited capacity is able to receive.

What interminable discussion, for example, has there been on the subject of the possibility of the soul's separate existence from the body! Mark how the Bible settles it by a word—the word “unclothed.” Not, says the apostle, that we would be unclothed. Though the soul groans in the present tabernacle, yet she has no desire to dwell separate from a body; still, however, the body is no more essential to the existence of the soul, than a tent is essential to the existence of the traveller whom it shelters.

Again, what a mass of gigantic intellect has been employed on inquiries respecting the existence and origin of evil! It is a very deep subject, and very mysterious. How is it that man, the Lord of creation, should be the chief sufferer: why are the good, as well as the bad, subject to many pains and sorrows—and why, in the end, are they laid in the same grave? How is it that, despite of all law and all restraint, there is such a continued, and, at the same time, such a universal outbreaking of violence and wickedness? Did God make man thus; and did he bind upon him, by a dire necessity, all this wickedness, and all this wo?

These are very difficult subjects. Well; has philosophy got the start of revelation upon them: can she, in fact, account for the present state of things at all? She cannot; and

would it not be true wisdom in her to receive with humility, from the Bible, the only explanation which God has been pleased to give? The Bible, in the beginning of Genesis, gives a simple and practical account of the origin of sin; and the introduction of suffering and death, as the consequence of sin. "By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "The wages of sin is death."

What immense advances have been made within a very few years in Natural History. In our young days, and that is not long ago, Mavor's Natural History was considered quite a standard work on this department of knowledge; but, alas, how grievously has our old Mentor been exposed within these last few years! There is much Natural History in the Bible: very particular references to the habits of animals. Have modern discoveries been able to point out any blundering among the sacred writers in Natural History? No; but every new discovery is giving stronger confirmation to the scripture statements; difficulties have been cleared away by new advances made in Natural History; and just as this and every other science advances towards perfection, the evidence for the truth of revelation will shine with greater brilliancy.

While on this subject, we cannot refrain from expressing with what high satisfaction we heard Mr. Young, the present talented professor of Mathematics in the Royal Belfast College, advocate, in his introductory lecture, the cause of Revelation, and assign to science her true place, not as the mistress, but the handmaid of Religion. The smatterer in Mathematics may imagine, in the vanity of his heart, that he has attained to a height, from which he can look down with contempt on Revelation; but the truly philosophical and humble mind finds in the sublimest walks of science, more abundant reason to admire the unsearchable treasures of wisdom and knowledge contained in the Book of God.

Few sciences exhibit such evidences as Astronomy of the widening and enlarging range of human discovery. Those clear shining points, appearing but as glittering nails in the solid concave, are now known to be suns and worlds, inhabited, there is reason to believe, like this world of ours. Have such discoveries as these got far in advance of the science of the Bible, placed its astronomy with the astronomy of the old school, and made it necessary that there should be a new edition of the work, adapted to the modern improve-

ments in science? Not only is there nothing in the Bible inconsistent with the discoveries of modern astronomy, but the Bible takes for granted the whole of them. Does modern astronomy say that there are other worlds besides ours—other rational beings besides ourselves? So says the Bible. “The heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them.” It speaks of principalities and powers—the sons of God, of different orders, peopling different portions of the dominions of the great Lord of all. Venerable grandfathers and grandmothers, don’t fear. The march of intellect, it may be, has left you so far behind, that, in many things, your grandchildren could be your teachers. The books used when you were at school, are all antiquated:—no, not all; one of them is as fresh and as young as ever. Human science may improve; but the knowledge which makes wise unto salvation comes perfect from its Divine Author. Every thing human requires improvement, but whatever is God’s does not admit of it. Journeys are performed now in a few hours, which occupied weeks long ago; so that places which once seemed far away, have been brought almost within call. But who can bring heaven nearer than the Bible has brought it, when it says, “The kingdom of God is within you;” and what shorter or easier way to it can ever be invented, than “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

MARRIAGE.

THE institution of marriage is almost universal; and its celebration is usually, both among civilized and savage nations, accompanied with certain solemnities or formalities; and the violation of the marriage contract, is considered, even among some barbarous nations, so heinous a crime, as to be worthy of death. Why all this? Does unassisted reason teach it? The infidel himself says no; for it has often been his delight to caricature marriage as an intolerable bond, unworthy of the fervour of genuine love, and inflicting unnumbered ills on multitudes of the most uncongenial spirits, whom it has yoked for life. Independently of revelation, what satisfactory account can be given of this remarkable institution? Is it consistent with the waywardness of man’s temper, the changeableness of man’s affections, the wild extravagance of man’s desires? Has not man, even while acknowledging its propriety, been continually sinning against it? We find no satisfactory account of

it, but that which the Bible gives—that it is an appointment of God; and with this information we can easily understand how, by tradition, it would spread among all nations, and descend to the remotest generations. The Bible informs us that God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.” “Therefore, shall a man leave his father, and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.” This marriage was a pattern for all marriages till the end of time, as our Saviour takes for granted, when he says, “Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female?” The original institution was a sacred union, between one man and one woman, which unfaithfulness or death alone could dissever. The history of the world bears abundant testimony to the wisdom of the institution.

Polygamy, in all its forms, is a curse. Family feuds innumerable, are but a portion of its baleful fruits. What a melancholy blot is polygamy in the history of the Patriarchs.—How unworthy of these great good men, were the petty janglings among their wives: and what fearful consequences followed the jealousies both of wives and children. How could family religion be maintained amidst such division and opposition of interest? How could one father preserve order, and exercise superintendence over family establishments bearing no warm goodwill to each other. The affection of the children of polygamy was comparatively feeble towards a father; and the link of connexion was far from being close among those who were merely children of the same father. “They were my brethren,” would have been a common-place phrase; but it receives at once the point and earnestness of affection when there is added to it—“the sons of my mother.”

Polygamy is not even friendly to population; and it could be easily shown to be decidedly hostile to the religious education of children. A remarkable confirmation of the appointment of marriage being confined to a union of one man and one woman, is derived from the proportion existing between the males and females born into the world. The proportion is nearly equal—but there is a small surplus of males: and this can be easily accounted for by the fact, that males are more exposed to accidents and dangers, and more of them likely, on

account of their circumstances, to find an early grave. Thus every where we see wisdom—every where design. The more we investigate the Bible, and facts connected with the Bible, the more firm, and beautiful, and glorious, do its blessed truths appear.

WHY IS MAN BORN NAKED?

To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.

I SHALL try to answer the question—if I am wrong, I shall feel happy in being corrected.

Can the philosopher account for the fact, that man, the favoured child of Providence, should be sent into the world in a condition so very destitute? Every other animal makes his appearance in the world with a covering suited to his climate; poor man comes into life crying, and, no wonder, for he is naked.

Now, the usual account of the matter is not satisfactory—That man's reason was given to him to supply the defect of clothing—for the reasoning process for providing suitable materials for clothing, and manufacturing these when procured, would be quite too slow to meet man's necessities. The first man might have been frozen before his reason would have provided him a suitable clothing—not to speak of the multiplied other injuries to which his naked body would have been exposed.

Mere philosophy cannot account for the fact of man being thus left to the slow process of discovery, while the lower animals, in addition to their natural coverings, are provided with instincts to provide for themselves suitable habitations.

There is another question, however, on this subject, which is put to philosophy in vain. Why is the shame of nakedness peculiar to man, and universal among all tribes of men, with the exception, perhaps, of a few most insulated degraded savages? Among the lower animals, we see nothing of this kind.

Of these important inquiries, the Bible furnishes the only satisfactory solution. The Bible tells us that when man was created in innocence, he needed no clothing, and he felt no shame. His Creator had prepared a habitation for him, in which he was subjected to no injury from the want of clothing. Every thing was in the fullest state of preparation for man when his Creator placed him on earth—the last and noblest of his works. He

was not sent forth into a world of changing seasons and varying temperature, naked and defenceless. All, at first, was happiness. But the Bible tells of a melancholy change. God drove out the man from the garden of bliss to a world cursed for his sake. Still, however, he was under a dispensation of grace, and God, reconciled in Christ, made the first pair coats of skins, and clothed them. The following is the account which the Bible gives of the origin of artificial clothing:—"And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." Again—"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." "And the Lord God called unto Adam, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked?" "Unto Adam also, and his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."

Such an account of the origin of artificial dress furnishes, surely, no ground for vanity. Alas, little do those, of either sex, who plume themselves upon their dress, think what disgraceful associations are connected with its origin! When man sinned, the feeling of shame, on account of nakedness, arose in his mind. God has so constituted his mind, that remorse and shame are the consequences of guilt. So soon as our first parents transgressed God's command, a deep feeling of shame, on account of nakedness, overwhelmed them, and this is called opening their eyes. This is the scriptural account of the matter; if infidelity can give a better, let her produce it.

THE GREATEST INFIDELS OFTEN THE GREATEST SINNERS.

1. No man has done more to advance the cause of Infidelity than Voltaire. What Abraham and St. Paul were to the cause of Faith, the same was he to the cause of Unbelief—an unreserved votary, a principal champion. But was Voltaire a man of virtue? Hear the testimony of Count Brandt, who had been drawn into the vortex of Infidelity, and long kept there, in a great measure, by his means. "To him he owed

very little that was good. He had spent four days with his old advocate for unbelief, and had *heard nothing from him but what would corrupt the heart and sound morals.*"

2. "Rousseau was only second to Voltaire in the estimation of the Infidels of France. And what was his moral character? During his minority, he was bound an apprentice to an artist, but frequently robbed his master, as well as other persons, and ran away before the term of his apprenticeship had expired. He then turned Catholic, became a footman—was found possessed of stolen goods again—he went into another family, and lived in illicit habits with his mistress. Going to the south of France, for his health, he dined with a gentleman, and had criminal intercourse with his wife. Walking with a friend one day in the street, his friend fell down in a fit, Rousseau robbed and left him. From Geneva, his native city, he was driven as an incendiary; nor did he forget how to thieve."

3. Servin, "was treacherous, cruel, cowardly, deceitful, a liar, a cheat, a drunkard, and a glutton; a sharper in play, immersed in every species of vice, a blasphemer; in a word, in him might be found all the vices contrary to nature, honour, religion, and society; and he died in the flower of his age, in a common brothel, perfectly corrupted by his debaucheries, with a glass in his hand, cursing and denying God."

4. Francis Newport, who died in 1692, when he turned Infidel, "became a most abandoned character, uniting himself to a club of wretches who met together constantly to encourage each other in being critically wicked. In this manner he conducted himself for several years, till at length his intemperate courses brought on his last illness."

5. Mr. William Emerson, "through life was rude, vulgar, and frequently immoral in his conduct; both intoxication and profane language were familiar to him."

6. The Earl of Rochester, while he remained an Infidel, "advanced to an uncommon height of wickedness, was an encomiast of Beelzebub, and raked the bottom of the jakes of debauchery."

7. "Lord Bolingbroke was a man of considerable talents, and lived and died an Infidel. But when we reflect, that he was at the same time a libertine, and much addicted to women and wine, we shall cease to wonder that he rejected Christianity, notwithstanding the high compliments he sometimes thought proper to pay it."

8. Sir William Temple, too, says Bennet, "was a person of true judgment in civil affairs, and very good principles, with relation to government; but in nothing else. He was a vain man, much blown up in his own conceit, which he showed too indecently on all occasions. He seemed to think, that things were as they are from all eternity; at least, he thought religion was fit only for the mob. He was a great admirer of the sect of Confucius in China, who were Atheists themselves, or left religion to the rabble. He was a corrupter of all that came near him, delivering himself up to study, ease and pleasure."

9. "Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftsbury, was a man of various talents, but a Deist, at best, in his religion. He had the dotage of astrology in him to a high degree. He fancied that, after death, our souls live in stars. He had a general knowledge of the slighter parts of learning, but understood little of the bottom; so he triumphed in a rambling way of talking, but argued slightly when he was held close to any point. He had a wonderful faculty at opposing, and running things down; but had not the like force in building up. He had such an extravagant vanity in setting himself out, that it was very disagreeable."—*Burnet.*

10. The Duke of Buckingham, was a *pretended Atheist*; he was also the slave of intemperance, without honour or principle, the minister of riot, and the counsellor of infamous practices.

11. "It is calculated, (says Mr. Simpson,) that, when trade goes pretty well, there are upon an average, 200,000 manufacturers in England who constantly spend their working hours in idleness, drinking, gambling, and debauchery. This large body of men may likewise be considered as *infidels in principle, atheists in practice*, and ripe for any wicked and desperate enterprise which may arise. They are the curse and scum of the country; and yet they are usually excessively 'wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own conceit.' All the world are fools beside themselves. They are great politicians, great philosophers, great divines—over their cups! and wisdom shall die with them."

No man has done more for the cause of Infidelity than Paine; and but few men in public life have exhibited a more corrupt example. He was the "betrayed of public trusts; the violater of domestic ties; the sordid ingrate; the violent defamer of unequalled virtue; the overweening boaster, and the habitual drunkard."

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CHRISTIANS LESS BARBAROUS THAN INFIDELS AND HEATHENS.

1. THE Roman emperors of the three first centuries after the birth of Christ, are somewhere said by Jerome, if I remember right, to have martyred 50,000 Christians per day, for every day in the year except one: that is, they put to death at different times during those centuries, one million, eight hundred, and twenty thousand souls !

2. The Babylonians are said to have introduced the unnatural custom of human sacrifices. The Sepharvites, probably a branch of that people, burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. 2 Kings, 17—31.

3. Among the Phenicians, a father did not scruple to immolate his own child; a husband to plunge his knife into a heart as dear to him as his own, to avert some public misfortune. *Porphyr.* 1—2.

4. In Carthage, the children of the nobility were sacrificed to Saturn. The calamities which Agathocles brought upon that city, were believed by the inhabitants to be a punishment for the substitution of ignoble blood; and to appease the wrath of God, they immolated 200 children of noble blood in one sacrifice. *Plut. de Superstit.*—*Diod. Sic.* 1—20.

5. The ancient Germans also sacrificed human victims. Their priestesses opened the veins of the sufferer, and drew omens from the rapidity of the streams of blood. *Tacit. Germ.* 9.—*Diod. Sic.* 1, 5. 20.

6. The ancient Britons likewise were equally cruel and superstitious.

7. The sacrifice of strangers and prisoners of war seems to have been general, even among the ancient nations which were more civilized. Achilles, in Homer, immolates twelve Trojans to the manes of Patroclus. *Il.* 23—175.

8. Even in the 532d year of Rome, two Greeks and two Gauls were buried alive in a public place of the city, to satisfy the superstitious prejudices of the populace. *Liv.* 1—22, c. 57.

9. Though the Greeks do not appear to have offered human sacrifices, yet whole States were at times reduced to slavery, and their lands confiscated, and their prisoners of war massacred in cold blood.

10. Conjugal infidelity among the Athenians had become so common, in the time of Pericles, that almost 5,000 of their

citizens were illegitimate. (*Plut. in Pericl.*) If at any time a man became eminent among them for virtue, he was generally sentenced to some kind of punishment, either to imprisonment, banishment, or death.

11. Dark, however, as the picture of the Athenians is exhibited, it is sunshine when compared with that of the Lacedemonians. See their history. By the laws of Sparta, a parent was permitted to destroy a weak or deformed child.

12. The Romans, though great and successful, were equally far from being a virtuous nation. They were the murderers and plunderers of the world. Julius Cesar boasted he had taken 800 towns, vanquished 300 states, fought three millions of men, of whom one million had been either slaughtered or reduced to slavery.

The number of men slain at different periods, even for their diversion and entertainment, was immense!

A creditor could, at the expiration of thirty days, seize an insolvent debtor, who could not find bail, and keep him sixty days in chains. During this time he was allowed to expose him three market days to public sale, for the amount of his debt, and at the expiration of the third, to put him to death. If there were many creditors, they were permitted to tear and divide his body among them.

A father had the right of life and death over his children, and, by the laws of Rome, was permitted to expose his child to perish.

The husband was the only judge and arbiter of his wife's fate. If a wife was convicted of committing adultery, or of drinking wine, her husband had a right to put her to death without the formality of a public trial; while she was not permitted, on any provocation, to lift her finger against him.

13. The American savages torture and burn to death their prisoners of war, and generally practise the most horrid cruelties on their enemies. Sometimes they knock out the brains of their aged and infirm parents.

14. The heathens of Asia burned thousands of widows with the corpses of their husbands; thousands perish in pilgrimages to Juggernaut, and millions come to an untimely end in various ways of cruelty and superstition.

15. The inhabitants of Africa are rude, uncultivated, and barbarous.

16. But history furnishes no parallel to the Infidels of enlightened France. They turned their arms one against another, and in seven years they murdered upwards of two

millions of their own countrymen, besides those that fell in battle ! At Lyons, they murdered 80,000 ; at Nantz, 27,000 ; at Paris, 150,000 ; in La Vendee, 300,000 ; and in short, through the whole of that unhappy country, 2,000,000 of persons, within six or seven years, during the Revolution ; including 250,000 women, 230,000 children, and 24,000 christian priests. The history of the French Revolution, which was chiefly conducted by Infidels, unfolds scenes of barbarity, numerous, various, and aggravated, in a most astonishing and unprecedented manner. But the main force of the argument founded on this history, is, that Infidelity dictated these horrid outrages. Heathenism, also, has dictated the barbarities before mentioned among the heathen nations. But though Infidels often charge Christianity with causing the greatest cruelties and miseries, the charge is completely rebutted by the fact, that Christianity altogether condemns such outrages, points all its terror against those who commit them, and has a most direct and powerful tendency to humanize and alleviate the condition of mankind.*—*New England Herald.*

DEATH OF LUTHER.

THUS matters proceeded till the 17th of February, Luther, at all proper times, applying himself to business, eating and sleeping well, and being very cheerful in his conversation. On that day, his friends, perceiving more repose to be desirable for him, persuaded him to keep quiet in his study, which he did, frequently walking up and down, in an undress, but conversing with animation. "From time to time," says Justus Joanas, "he would stop, and looking out at the window, in that attitude (as his custom was,) address fervent prayers to God, so that Cœlius and I, who were in the room with him, could not but perceive it: and then he would say, 'I was born and baptized here at Eisleben ; what if I should remain or even die here ?' " Another of his friends, Razeberg, the elector's physician, has preserved one of the prayers, as it would seem, which he thus offered while walking up and down in his study. It is in the following terms—principally referring to the reli-

* For most of the historical facts contained in this article, we are indebted to "A Plea for Religion and the Sacred Writings," by Rev. D. Simpson, M. A.

gious interests of his native country: 'O Lord God, heavenly Father, I call upon thee in the name of thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, imploring that, according to thy promise, and for the glory of thy name, thou wouldest most graciously hear the prayers which I offer up unto thee, beseeching thee that, as thou hast of thy mercy and boundless goodness discovered to me the great apostacy and blindness of the Pope before the day of thy last advent, which is at hand, and is to succeed that diffusion of the light of the gospel which now dawns upon the world, so thou wouldest graciously preserve the church of my beloved country in the acknowledgment of the truth, and the unwavering confession of thy uncorrupted word, without failing, even to the end; that the whole world may know that thou hast sent me for this very purpose. Even so, O most blessed Lord God! Amen and Amen!'

"Though, however, Luther passed the day in his study, he did not choose to sup there, but in the large-dining room; observing, that 'to be solitary did not help the spirits.' During supper, he quoted and made observations on many interesting passages of Scripture. The conversation also happening to turn on the question, whether the righteous would recognise those who had been their friends on earth, in a future state of blessedness, he gave his opinion decidedly in the affirmative. In the course of more ordinary conversation, he remarked, 'If I can but establish peace among the counts, the rulers of my country, I will then go home, lay myself down in my coffin, and give my body for food to the worms.'

"Before supper he had complained of a pain in the chest, to which he was subject. It was, however, relieved by warm applications. After supper it returned; but he would not have medical aid called in, but about nine o'clock lay down on a couch, and fell asleep. He awoke as the clock struck ten, and desired that those about him would retire to rest. When led into his chamber, he said, 'I go to rest with God;' and repeated the words of the Psalm, 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit,' &c.: and stretching out his hand to bid all good-night, he added, 'Pray for the cause of God.' He then went to bed; but about one o'clock he awoke Jonas and another, who slept in the room with him, desired that a fire might be made in his study, and exclaimed, 'Oh God! how ill I am! I suffer dreadful oppression in my chest: I shall certainly die at Eisleben!'—He then removed into his study without requiring assistance, and again repeating, 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit!' He walked backwards and forwards, and desired

to have warm clothes brought him. In the mean time, his physicians were sent for, as also Count Albert, who presently came with his countess. All Luther's friends and his sons were collected about him; medicines were given him, and he seemed somewhat relieved; and having lain down on a couch he fell into a perspiration. This gave encouragement to some present: but he said, 'It is a cold sweat, the fore-runner of death, I shall yield up my spirit.' He then began to pray, nearly in these words: 'O eternal and merciful God, my heavenly Father, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and God of all consolation! I thank thee that thou hast revealed to me thy Son Jesus Christ; in whom I have believed, whom I have preached, whom I have confessed, whom I love and worship as my dear Saviour and Redeemer, whom the Pope and the multitude of the ungodly do persecute, revile and blaspheme. I beseech thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, receive my soul. O heavenly Father, though I be snatched out of this life, though I must now lay down this body, yet know I assuredly that I shall dwell with thee for ever, and that none can pluck me out of thy hands!'—He then thrice again repeated the words, 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit!' 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life:' and that verse of the sixty-eighth Psalm, 'Our God is the God of whom cometh salvation: God is the Lord by whom we escape death.' He then became silent, and his powers began to fail him: but, when several present addressed him, 'Reverend Father, you die in the constant confession of Christ and his doctrine, which you have preached?' he distinctly answered, 'Yes,' and spoke no more; but, about a quarter of an hour afterwards, between two and three o'clock in the morning, with his hands clasped together, and without a finger or a feature being disturbed, gently breathed his last."

THE SABBATH.

To the Editors of the Christian Freeman

GENTLEMEN,—I was glad to observe that you directed the attention of your readers, some time ago, to part of the Evidence taken by the late Parliament, on the subject of Sabbath Observance. The time is again approaching when the matter will be brought anew before the House of Commons—and

when it will, we trust, be made to appear, that the pious and humane, of every class, are fully alive to the subject.

It is, indeed, difficult to understand how any intelligent and humane man can be either opposed or indifferent to the most perfect protection of the Sabbath ; cases of necessity and charity being excepted. It seems perfectly clear, from the very constitution of man, and from facts open to the inspection of all, that a day of weekly rest, or something equivalent, is necessary to the healthful enjoyment of life itself. The Divine Being has been pleased to provide an alternation of rest with activity, to the whole animal creation ; and the very laws of inanimate matter are so fixed as to secure this. The darkness of the night, separating one day from another, prevents continued activity—invites to rest, and spreads itself as a covering over the countless tribes of earth. Even beasts of prey, which prowl in the forest, during this season of repose, and mingle their discordant utterances with the solitude of the night, have their season of rest. When the sun returns, awakening anew our busy world, these retire to their dens, hiding themselves from the light, and becoming buried in sleep. But amongst the countless tribes of animated being, man is pre-eminent for *continued* and *wasting* activity ; and this very much in proportion as he is raised by cultivation and refinement above a rude and savage state. Both body and mind are now under artificial, as well as natural excitement ; and the nervous system is thus often enfeebled and shaken, till the cheerful and active enjoyment of health becomes unknown, and even life itself is not unfrequently reached and sacrificed by such means. Instances of this kind must be familiar to all, who are generally conversant with their fellow-creatures. But among the inhabitants of large cities and manufacturing districts, they do not form cases, but classes. This was very fully brought out in the Evidence, from which you published extracts ; and might be farther proved from the testimony of medical men, in every part of the United Kingdom. Now, the Divine Being has been pleased to provide against this extraordinary exhaustion, by securing to man, and such of the inferior animals as share with him in his toils, a day of weekly rest. This has been found to be, in general, sufficient, and it is admitted, on all hands, to be admirably fitted for securing the end in view. So much is this the case, that wherever it is fully and rightly enjoyed, no labour or exertion, short of what would be oppressive, is found to be too much ; and in few cases is the rest of the Sabbath either dispensed with, or turned to improper purposes, without entail-

ing evil on the individual. We certainly do not mean to allege, that as soon as any one ceases to observe the rest of the Sabbath, he forthwith suffers. A man may, and many do, deprive themselves of the rest of the night; some changing night into day, and day into night, and others scarcely allowing themselves the rest of either, and yet they do not *immediately* suffer; but every one knows, that such practices are prejudicial to health and comfort, and that they are equally at variance with the appointed order and beneficent institutions of Divine Providence. And the same thing is true of every unnecessary encroachment on the rest of the Sabbath.

But there are, we know, some who will admit all this, and yet maintain that it should be left to every man to rest or work, to observe or profane the Sabbath, as he thinks fit; and it will perhaps be alleged, from the case of diurnal rest, that as a man may sleep or wake, as he sees fit, so ought he, on mere rational principles, to be allowed to rest on the Sabbath or work, according to pleasure. Now this reasoning would be, at least plausible, if the cases were parallel. But to render them so, it is necessary to suppose, that the waking of one man prevents the sleeping of another. Suppose, for example, that two families were living under the same roof, and that the one kept up a regular dance with music every night, so as wholly to prevent the other family from enjoying rest, if they would, and then it would be proper to ask, "Would such things be allowed?" Every one knows that they would not—that every well regulated police establishment would at once interfere, and that they would be held as transgressors who had so chosen to spend the night, even in their own houses. Now, if the labour or profanity of my fellow-citizen does equally deprive me, or some more dependent fellow-creature, of the rest of the weekly sabbath, have I not equally good grounds to complain? It will probably be said, But this cannot be. We are unwilling, at present, to speak of the Sabbath as a religious ordinance, and therefore to refer to the hindrance, which the profanity of one puts in the way of Sabbath sanctity as observed by others; but we may at once take even stronger grounds, and affirm, that many thousands of our fellow subjects are absolutely prevented from resting on the Sabbath, in consequence of the profanity of others. Of the London Journeyman Bakers alone, not fewer than 70,000 had petitioned the House of Commons for protection from Sabbath labour, nearly eighteen months ago, and these formed only a moiety of the sufferers in that single occupation: and although London is very much

larger than any other city in the Empire, yet the number of Bakers, suffering very much as these did, throughout other parts of England, and in some parts of this country, is also great. And yet this is only one class. Butchers, fishmongers, green-grocers, coach drivers, hostlers, watermen, and servants, of various descriptions, suffer also to an extent which has not yet been fully ascertained. And along with these, and many other classes, we ought not to forget even the dumb creation, whose silent sighs are not without an avenger in heaven.

We have heard it indeed sometimes said, that no man is forced to labour on the Sabbath, and that if he does, it is of his own free choice, and he has himself to blame. But this is only to quibble in argument, and to insult the helpless amidst his sufferings. Are the inhabitants of the factory forced to continue in their employ, seeing they are protected by legislative enactment? The master has no power to detain them; but necessity has, in many cases, put them wholly in their master's power, and therefore has the Legislature thrown the shield of its protection over them. And those who are forced to labour on the Lord's day are in precisely the same circumstances. If the servant or journeyman say, "I will not work," the master has only to reply, "then go"—to convince him that if he does not work, neither shall he have the means of living, either for himself, or for those who may be dependent on him. And if the shop-keeper say to his customers, "I cannot any longer serve you on Sabbath," he will, in many cases, have for his answer, "well, another will;" and so, by shutting his shop on the first day of the week, he is allowed to have it much thinned during the week. But it is unnecessary to speculate on this subject; the thing was tried in nearly all the employments to which we have referred. *Individuals* made the attempt; *combinations* were formed for mutual protection; and it was found, that the more extensive the combination, the stronger was the temptation to break through it; and the more were others invited to take advantage. And hence the numerous petitions which were poured into the House of Commons in 1832, were got up chiefly by those who had laboured *in vain*, attempting to gain their end by other means.

We have had the misfortune, also, to meet some who, when convinced of the necessity of legislative protection, still shook their heads, and remarked, that they did not like the interference of government with the liberty of the subject. We confess, we have been astonished to hear such pitiful and

ignorant suspicions, coming from men who professed to understand the nature of civil government. For is it not the very first and most essential end of every government, to protect the subject in the enjoyment of every privilege compatible with the well-being of society? And is it not a necessary condition, towards the attainment of this, that the subject give up to the government, so much of his liberty as may be necessary for securing this end? The government of this country, for example, engage to protect the life and property of the subject; but, to enable the government to do so, the subject has to lay aside those means of defence which would be otherwise allowable; and, even when he has detected some one injuring him, he is not allowed to deal with him as nature may prompt, but he must deliver him over to the public prosecutor, to be dealt with according to law. Suppose, now, the scruples in question to be applied here. The law says, "You shall not wear arms except in particular circumstances; and when you find a person even plundering you, he is not to be detained or dismissed as you please, but he is to be given up to the proper officers." Suppose you were to reply, "As I alone am the sufferer, I have a right to do as I think fit," would not every intelligent man laugh you to scorn; reminding you that, on your principles, there could be no government nor protection. And it is on precisely the same principle that we are called upon to strengthen the laws, in securing to all a due observance of the Sabbath.

It is very true, indeed, that the protection of life and property is a more elementary end of government than the protection of the Sabbath; and it is easy to conceive, how a nation might admit and require the one, while they would scarcely submit to the other. But this is just the difference between two states of society. The more rude the state of society, the more unwilling are subjects to entrust their rights and privileges to others; and the more refined and intelligent any country becomes, the more ready will the inhabitants be to surrender individual claims for the attainment of social advantages. This is the case, not merely in legislation, but in common manners. Enter into the society of the rude and uncivilized, and selfishness reigns predominant. No man will do for another what he is not prompted to by the strong feelings of nature, or induced to do from motives of avarice and pride. But pass from this into cultivated and well regulated society, and there seems to be almost nothing which one is not ready to do for another; so that the common good appears to

be the common feeling. Ask, now, whether the amount of happiness and true liberty be lessened by these means, and you will be told that, instead of this, every individual is thus enabled to enjoy a much larger share of both. And it is exactly the same in legislation. In proportion as intelligence increases, individuals will be able to see how their privileges are thus better secured, and more amply enjoyed. Let the law be just, and really productive of general good, and no man ought to hinder its operation; but rather to promote it with all his might.

It is on this account that the Sabbath question has gained ground wherever it has been allowed a fair hearing, even among men who were utterly regardless of its divine obligation. It addresses itself to reason and humanity where there is no recognition of any higher authority; and if there be a country in christendom, where its voice so addressed, should be listened to, it is that of the United Kingdom. In no country perhaps of the world, is human nature more powerfully and continually excited to exertion, than in the commercial and manufacturing districts of Great Britain and Ireland. And, among all the forms of heathen and christian worship, the Protestant, but especially the Presbyterian, has the fewest holidays. Comparing Presbyterians with Roman Catholics, for example, how very different are they in this respect. The one has many holidays; the other has absolutely none but the weekly Sabbath. Take from the latter, therefore, his Sabbath, and you have taken from him his all. Allow it to be encroached upon, and you have trod near to his very life. You have pressed on the springs of even his physical existence; and, need we add, you have denied him an opportunity of holding converse with his God.

I am, Gentlemen, your obed't. servant,

A FRIEND OF HUMANITY.

10th December, 1833.

P.S.—You may expect to hear from me in a second paper on the religious view of the question.

in and motion

FACTS, FRAGMENTS, SAYINGS, AND ANECDOTES—NO. III.

“Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.”

A LADY once heard the great Ebenezer Erskine at a Communion, and was so delighted that she followed him the next Sabbath to another:

she, did not feel however, the same satisfaction as on the former occasion, and expressed her disappointment to Mr. Erskine himself. His reply gives a lesson to gospel hearers, deserving of being perpetuated in the church—"Madam," said he, "you came the first day to hear Jesus Christ; but the second to hear Ebenezer Erskine, and no wonder you were disappointed." John Newton gives the following caution with regard to candour in hearing sermons. "After hearing a gospel sermon with which you are not altogether satisfied, be not too hasty in throwing all the blame upon the preacher. It will be more safe for you, as a hearer, to consider whether the fault did not lie in yourself. Perhaps you had too high an opinion of the man, and wanted to hear him instead of God; if so, you have been justly disappointed. Or, perhaps, you thought too little of him, and expected too little; if so, you have received according to your faith."

The celebrated John Locke made a point to converse with mechanics of all descriptions, respecting their several trades and callings. In this he showed the true philosopher. Every man, however humble and illiterate, knows something more perfectly than any other man; and, therefore, the greatest philosopher or divine, need not be ashamed to take instruction from a child or from a labourer. How much more does this hold good, in regard to the experience of the children of God. The minister of the gospel may often learn much of piety, from the conversation of the humblest of his flock.

The late Doctor Young, of the Belfast College, was a man of rare intellectual endowments. He was a Trinitarian and Calvinist. In his day it was a current notion with many, No matter what a man believes, if he live a moral life. Conversing one day on this subject with a friend, he exclaimed in his usual powerful manner, "Sir, the notion that it is no matter what a man believes, is the Antichrist of Belfast." Since the publication however, of Doctor Bruce's Sermons, on the one side, and Mr. Paul's Refutation of Arianism on the other, together with the discussions in the Synód of Ulster and the Separation of the Remonstrant Synod, all parties lay much stress upon doctrine. There is another pernicious error which has rapidly given way since Doctor Wardlaw's able publication in reply to Brougham—"That a man is no more accountable to God, for his religious belief, than for the colour of his skin, or the height of his stature." Conduct is the result of mind, and if we are accountable for what we do, we are surely accountable for the regulation of mind. The acts of mind, are actions in the sight of God.

Another energetic saying of Doctor Young's, is well remembered.

Speaking on the subject of our Lord's Deity, he exclaimed—"Let men reason as they will, I know that my Redeemer must be God, because he is set forth as the object of my worship "

Travelling once as a Missionary, in Queen's County, I entered a Roman Catholic burying ground. It was full of head stones, with the inscription of a cross on each, and a "Pray for the soul of," &c. An old man was kneeling at a grave stone; and when he arose, I entered into conversation with him. Without reference to controversy, raising the watch words of which only closes the mind of the Roman Catholic, or any other erring neighbour, I endeavoured to lead his mind to the *blood of Jesus*, as the only offering the sinner can plead with acceptance to God for his free pardon. "Ah, Sir," exclaimed the poor man, "but I must do something to earn that blood." All effort to clear his mind further was unavailing. Are there no Protestants who cherish the same self-righteous imagination in spirit and principle? If we imagine, that coming to the Sacrament, as it is called, or giving alms, either are offerings of merit with God, or must be done to *prevail with* Christ to plead his blood to "give them weight," we are ignorant of the scheme of grace unfolded in the gospel; and either deny or corrupt the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. I have had my heart melted to grief at witnessing the places where Roman Catholics travel round holy wells on bare and bleeding knees, to obtain remission of their sins: but are there not thousands of nominal protestants who are guilty of the same soul destroying error, by imagining that their doings or their sufferings procure for them the mercy of God? Self-righteousness is an insinuating, a dangerous, and a prevailing sin. One of its most tempting and dangerous forms, is, when it disclaims the idea of setting aside the merits of Christ, but retains the false assumption, that we must do something to put with them, and without which that righteousness would be insufficient. "I do not," said Paul, "frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain."

Superstition has mingled itself in minds glorying in their contempt of religion. Lord Byron, when a boy, was warned by a fortune teller, that he would die in the 37th year of his age. That idea haunted him, and in his last illness, he mentioned it as precluding hope of recovery. It depressed, his Physician says, that energy of Spirit so necessary for nature in struggling with disease. He talked of two days, as his unlucky days, on which nothing could tempt him to communicate a matter of importance; and he mentioned it as an excuse for such fancies, that his friend, Shelley, the poet, had a Familiar, who

had warned him that he should perish by drowning ; and such was the fate of that gifted but misguided man. Yet, these are the men, who could insult the religious, as drivellers and bigots, and set their mouth against the heavens.

Corrupt professors of religion have in all ages been the grand obstruction to its progress. Brainerd, in the Narrative of his Mission among the Indians, observes that he had great difficulty, for a long time, to erase from their minds, a suspicion that he had formed some design of injuring them, under a pretence of preaching the gospel ; so frequently had they been defrauded by nominal christians.

Speaking of Sampson choosing Delilah for his wife, Henry, thus remarks with equal point and truth—"He, that in the choice of a wife, is guided only by his eye, and governed by his fancy, must afterwards thank himself, if he find a Philistine in his arms."

"Good the beginning, good the end shall be,
And transitory evil only makes
The good end happier."—SOUTHEY.

"Forgiveness to the injured doth belong ;
But they ne'er pardon who commit the wrong."—DRYDEN.

Burns, as well as Byron, was a melancholy example of the misery of sinful pleasures. In one of his letters, he makes this memorable confession—"Even in the hour of social mirth, my gaiety is the madness of an intoxicated criminal, under the hands of the executioner."

John Newton, relates the following striking anecdote, with the admirable comment subjoined. "Doctor Taylor, of Norwich, said to me, 'Sir, I have collated every word in the Hebrew Scriptures, seventeen times ; and it is very strange, if the doctrine of the atonement you hold, should not have been found by me.' I am not surprised at this : I once went to light my candle with the *extinguisher* on it : now, prejudices from education, learning, &c., often form an *extinguisher*. It is not enough that you bring the candle—you must remove the *extinguisher*."

Whitfield, Wesley, and the Methodist Preachers, when they first went forth, calling the wicked to repentance, suffered much persecution from magistrates and the mob. Wesley, in his 109th Sermon, (on God's Vineyard) relates the following anecdote—A great man applied personally to his Majesty, begging that "he would please to take a course to stop these run about preachers." His Majesty looking sternly on him, answered, without ceremony, like a KING, "I tell you, while I sit on the throne, no man shall be persecuted for conscience sake."

CEPHAS.

THE FUNERAL ON THE WEDDING DAY.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

"THE bride is dead, the bride is dead!
Cold, and fair, and frail, she lieth;
 Wrapped is she in sullen lead,
 And a flower is at her head,
And the breeze above her sigheth."

SOME time since, as I was going from house to house among the people of my flock, with the view of promoting their religious interests, on entering a certain dwelling my attention was arrested by the following circumstances, which left a deep, though not altogether painful, impression on my mind.

It is necessary to inform your readers, that death had been in the family the preceding year, and that the removal of a beloved parent had scarcely ceased to awaken sorrowful recollections. The "weeds of woe" had indeed been laid aside, and the mellowing influence of time, accompanied, I trust, by an influence higher and holier, had done its work. Still there was a pleasing seriousness of demeanour which well comported with the affectionate obedience, which she who "was then no more," had uniformly experienced from her children. If all the humbler classes, thought I, would only imitate the example of these devout simple hearted people, how happy would be the land we live in; how free from the sinful disquietudes which embitter the sweetest cup of life!

I was received, as I generally am among the people of that class, with a warmheartedness for which the politeness that is learned by rote, forms a miserable substitute. There were some strangers present on the occasion; and every countenance bore evidence of a deep, calm, I might almost add, christian, sorrow,—all indicating a heavy and very recent affliction. What could be its nature? Had death been making more ravages? I hesitated to ask, lest my question might increase the grief of those whose "trouble," I saw, "was great." The absence of one member of the family at first created some alarm in my mind, but he soon joined us, and thus the cause of the affliction was to me darker than before.

During this short pause of "expressive silence," I had leisure to survey the interesting group of immortal beings to whom I was expected to administer consolation. The scene is at present before my memory vivid as the recollections of

yesterday. Three of the characters I specially marked, and the result confirmed the accuracy of first impressions. Opposite me sat an elderly female whose heart sorrow had filled, yet she was not overcome by it. There was evidently some counter-acting force. It was as if a voice of power had said to the waves as they rolled on in wild commotion, "Hitherto shall ye come, but no further." The countenance was beautifully serene; and, though a tear might be seen stealing down the cheek, the mastery which she possessed over her feelings, and her placid features seemed to say "The will of the Lord be done." Beside her, on the right, was a young woman, whom I afterwards discovered to be her daughter. She too was sorrowful; and she too was resigned, but not to the same extent. There was a bewilderment in her manner, which plainly told that the affliction had at first taken her by surprise. Her heart could not cease to hope till the very moment that the stroke descended, and then was she stunned by its severity. But there was now a chastened mildness under the rod, and a mustering of fortitude; and you could almost discover on her part an anxiety to attain, like her afflicted parent, cordial resignation to the will of her Father in heaven. The young man whose absence had at first alarmed me, was seated near myself. He looked fatigued and restless. Strong emotion was at work in his bosom; and he was labouring to conceal it, not for his own sake, but with a view to console those who looked up to him in the hour of need. There was a noble struggling against grief; while the sympathies which he evinced bore upon them the stamp of truth. I felt deeply interested; and such is the melting power of sorrow, that I could have mingled my tears with theirs, though the cause of their suffering was unknown to me.

It was soon all explained. The young man was in bed when I entered the house: he had not slept the previous night: he had spent it in the churchyard, watching a grave from the depredations of "the resurrection men." Whose grave? The grave of his betrothed; the grave of her whom in a few weeks he had hoped to call his own: when disease interposed, and death forbade the union for ever. For a few moments my heart died within me. *There* were the mother and sister and plighted husband of the departed—of one whom it had pleased the Disposer of all events to remove under circumstances peculiarly distressing. How I wished that some one more experienced in the ways of God, and better skilled in the workings of the human heart, had occupied my place!

The task, after all, was not so difficult as I apprehended. The religion of Jesus removed the difficulty. The bride was dead, but there was *hope* in her death. The wedding dress had been exchanged for the winding sheet: but the survivors could entertain good hope that "she they mourned," was now clad in the garments of salvation, and arrayed in the robes of righteousness.

"How bright these glorious spirits shine! whence all their bright array?"

How came they to the blissful seats of everlasting day?

Lo! these are they from sufferings great, who came to realms of light,

And in the blood of Christ have washed those robes which shine so bright.

Now with triumphal palms they stand before the throne on high,
And serve the God they love, amidst the glories of the sky."

I endeavoured to direct the attention of these, "sorrowing, yet rejoicing" christians to the love of God in Christ Jesus, his ways to man, and the divinely appointed means of obtaining the sanctified use of affliction. All were deeply impressed; and after joining with them in prayer to the throne of mercy, I took my leave, "weeping with them that wept," and also blessing God for the triumphs of his grace. My spirit rejoiced in witnessing the majesty and power of christianity. I saw the religion of Jesus transcending every other system, whether of infidel scepticism, or ignorant superstition, far as the sun in the firmament is exalted above the region of clouds and mists. These may sometimes veil his radiance from human observation, but he still moves in cloudless splendour, and he bursts through their shadowy barriers in floods of light and glory. So it is with christianity. The source of her brightness is the shechinah, "uncreate" in the heavenly temple; and though the mists of a "philosophy, falsely so called," may for a season intercept her sunshine, they shall be dispelled for ever, and the earth shall be covered with the light of the glory of God.

Will the minister of peace and righteousness, as he turns from such a scene, believe christianity to be a delusion? Nay, he *will* not,—he *cannot*. He must first uproot *truth* from his mind; he must first trample upon *evidence*; he must first cast away love, hope, conscience, and his own soul also. Yes, "Christ crucified," he knows to be the power of God, and the wisdom of God to all them that believe. "Happy," therefore, "is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

I was desirous to learn more fully the account of the dying experience of her who had been cut down as "the flower of the field." My desire was gratified in the course of a few days by the receipt of an interesting letter, from which I shall take the liberty of laying a few extracts before your readers. The writer was the young man for whom I felt, and do still feel, deep sympathy and sincere regard. The following is a portion of its contents:—

SIR,—As you have expressed so much concern about my dear departed friend, I trust you will be pleased to hear a short account of some of her sayings in her last moments. Being asked by an intimate friend how she felt the state of her mind, her answer was, "I thank God, I find my mind happy. I have good hope that God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins." Her friend then rejoined, "I suppose you find Jesus to be precious." She said, "Oh yes, precious, precious, precious Jesus! what would I do if I had not Jesus?"

Her friend calling again, inquired if she felt any fear of death? She said, "Oh no; if it is the will of my heavenly Father, I would wish to die that I might be with Jesus." He then asked, if it would not be better for her to live that she might glorify God, and be useful among his people in the world? She replied, "Ah no; I have done with the world; I have given up the world, and all its concerns; I have no desire to return to the world again."

On another occasion, her attention having been directed to the glorious truth that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's own son, cleanseth from all sin, she said, with deep emotion, "Glory be to God, I believe *that*;" and she prayed to Jesus Christ to cleanse her. Then, taking up the language of the poet, she added,

"My Jesus to know, and to feel his blood flow,
'Tis life everlasting, 'tis heaven below."

At one time, under the influence of temptation, she said she feared she would have to *give up*; but being comforted again, she exclaimed, "I dare not offend Christ: why need I fear while I have Jesus? Oh no, I need not, I need not!" At another time, she made the joyous declaration—"I do feel the love of God shed abroad in my heart. Oh! the love of God to me."

In this state of mind chiefly she continued during the few remaining hours of her earthly pilgrimage, in fact, every breath was spent in prayer and praise.—I remain, yours, &c.

Such are a few of the statements communicated to me respecting this case of very peculiar interest. It would not be easy to conceive of death under circumstances more truly distressing: the darkness of the grave extinguishing the light of hope and joy; the pall of mourning falling down upon a scene of anticipated gladness; *the funeral on the wedding day!*

Let the narrative speak for itself, and let your readers learn from it the value of heavenly hope, and the sustaining power of the love of God shed abroad in the heart.

D.

SECESSION CHURCH—NO. III.

EVANGELICAL DOCTRINE.

EVERY branch of the Church, reformed according to the Presbyterian model, once held forth in a united profession that system of doctrine generally named Calvinistic. The Reformed Church of Holland, of Geneva, of France, of Switzerland, and of Scotland, as well as the Church of England, respectively embodied these doctrines in their public standards. Adherence to them, in teaching and communion, was once the uniform practice of these churches. The views which this system gave of man's sinfulness and God's grace, were peculiarly opposed to the notions of human merit and power cherished in the Romish Church. The absolute dependence upon divine grace, which it urges, directly contradicts this church in her views of the efficacy of external forms, bodily exercises, and sufferings. Whatever system amongst us, in an undue degree, elevates our ideas of man and his services, and lowers our ideas of dependence upon the free mercy of God, in so far as any system has this tendency, it may be called the popery of Protestantism.

The Secession claims strict relationship in faith to the ancient Puritans of England—the men of God who renounced their livings, at the restoration of Charles II., rather than forsake the faith which we maintain, or be deprived of that unanimity in church communion which we have been enabled still to preserve. This portion of our fathers, under the name of Non-conformists, founded the old Dissenting Presbyterian Church of England. What remains of this church, in which Baxter and Allein, Marshall and Dyer, Ambrose, Watson, and Henry, held and preached the same gospel—now universally preached in the Secession—alas! is the Unitarianism of England. At the present day, we think ourselves called upon to state plainly and strongly to our people—to all who will give us a candid hearing, that the unanimous profession of our Church in Ireland, and in every land in which she has been planted, is the same doctrinal profession which the Puritans made while living, and left to us in their writings when they died. Because in faith we are strictly the descendants of such men, and because we differ widely from their nominal descendants—the Arians and Socinians of England—the Secession has a fair claim to the respect of all who profess attachment to the sentiments of these Worthies.

Let us turn for a moment to the Church called Reformed, and

Presbyterian, at Geneva. How widely does our Church differ from the present Church of Geneva! The writings of the famous Calvin tell what she once was, in her faith and discipline. In the year 1817, the company of Pastors of Geneva passed a law, by which persons licensed to preach were obliged to promise that they will not preach, nor defend in a controversial manner, the doctrines of the Trinity, original sin, election, the atonement, and the efficacy of grace. When a minister obeys the pastors in this, he cannot give honest adherence to the ancient standards of Geneva. Socinianism now prevails in that Church where Calvin once taught the doctrines of grace. Let Seceders remember, however, that in the days of her glory, to which the friends of the Reformation look back with high respect, her faith and teaching were the same, and only the same, that are now, and ever have been, found in the Secession Church. They who love the doctrines taught by Calvin, and approve the church order which he practised, ought, in consistency, to be our Friends.

All the Reformed Churches of the continent are deficient like Geneva in exhibiting a profession agreeable to their ancient standards. In as far as this is the case, they differ from us. We agree with their ancestors, but we differ from them. The doctrines of their former standards are the doctrines of our standards, not adhered to in the Secession merely in name, but really supported and defended. As evidence of this agreement, it may be recorded that some years ago, the Rev. Cesar Malan, of Geneva, was removed from a situation which he held, in consequence of teaching and defending the doctrines of Calvin. He came to Britain, and remained for some time. During his stay, he attended a meeting of the United Secession Synod, at Edinburgh. Some reason which I do not now remember, induced him to wish for ministerial membership with the Synod. The usual course was followed—our standards were exhibited—Malan found them to contain the doctrines, for teaching which he had been driven from Geneva—he freely gave his assent, and was admitted a member of the United Secession Church. This privilege he will continue to enjoy as long as he does not teach doctrines opposed to our profession, or follow practices inconsistent with it. To establish, in a proper manner, either of these, would dissolve the union.

Observe the bearing of this transaction, in reference to the Secession. Malan took up the mantle of Calvin, and preached the gospel contained in the ancient scriptural confession of the Geneva Church—the company of Pastors frowned upon him—he left Geneva for a time—he visited our shores, and found in the Secession a profession similar to his own—and his was drunk from the old Reformation springs, opened by Calvin—proclaiming to the world that the Secession is a true descendant of this eminent Reformer.

With the doctrinal articles of the Church of England we also claim an agreement. The articles of that Church which do not refer to government or discipline we believe to be strictly Calvinistic; and under this view they contain the doctrines which we teach and endeavour to reduce to practice. It was from these articles, in agreement with scripture, that the Puritans learned those doctrines of free grace which are largely exhibited in their writings. These writings every Seceder loves, and in loving them, shows his relation to their renowned authors. Ye who revere the Puritans, your friends are in the Secession.

Early in the 17th century, multitudes of Scotch and English families settled in Ulster. These all professed the Reformed religion, and the far greater number adhered to the Reformed Church of Scotland. Just as settlers at present in Canada are anxious to have among them Presbyterian ministers under whose teaching they spent their earlier years, so the Ulster settlers sought for and obtained Ministers from Scotland to preach the faith and practise the order under which their fathers had lived and died. From 1611 till 1700, a very large number of Presbyterian congregations were organized in the North of Ireland. As they increased in numbers, they proceeded in forming different Presbyteries; and during the period I have named, the General Synod of Ulster was constituted. The Synod, at this period, embraced in its communion those only who believed the doctrines, and submitted to the Government of the Scotch Reformed Church. No minister, *then*, of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, could be found teaching the doctrines of Arminius or Arius. Accordingly, in 1705, the General Synod of Ulster did regularly adopt the Westminster Confessions and Catechisms, as subordinate standards of faith. The Irish Synod of that time, would not have permitted any to be teachers of the people, under its authority, who opposed the doctrines of this Confession. Had they ascertained that any of their ministers did not preach the gospel, the next step would have been his suspension, because unfit for the office of Christ's ambassador. Had the Synod *then* found any congregation without regularly appointed elders, or found persons usurping the place of elders, in Presbyteries and Synods, our Fathers of the General Synod, in the 17th century, would have corrected these unpresbyterian irregularities as quickly, as the Presbyterian Secession Synod of Ireland would at the present day. When on this subject I am forced to imitate the language of a living author, (in a late address to the religious public,) and exclaim, "Shades of Welsh, and Cunningham, and Blair and Hall, could you look down upon the desolations of that Zion which you founded and loved, could you hear the contradictory doctrines taught, and see the general neglect of congregational Presbyterian order and discipline permitted among those who claim exclusively to be your sons, how would you grieve—if those glorified as you are can grieve.

The Secession Synod maintain the same religious profession in all its parts which the Synod of Ulster exhibited in the beginning of the last century. The Synod of Ulster *then* required strict agreement in believing and teaching the doctrines of the gospel; the Secession does so at present. In 1705, none would be permitted to be a minister in the Synod of Ulster, who did not adhere to the Westminster Confession as that Confession, was received by the General Assembly in 1647. At present, every minister in the Irish Secession, at his ordination, adheres to the Confession and Catechisms in answering the question No. 2. Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrines contained in the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms larger and shorter, as received and approved by the Acts of Assembly, 1647 and 1648, to be agreeable to the word of God; and do you acknowledge them as the Confession of your Faith? *Then* every Presbyterian elder made the same public profession of faith with the minister, and was publicly set apart to the office. The same is now uniformly practised in the Secession. At that time persons claiming church

privileges were, in some form, required to give, or were known to yield, their assent to the Confession of Faith. The same course is still followed by the Secession.

On these grounds we claim to be strictly the followers of the original Synod of Ulster, in unitedly maintaining and preaching Evangelical principles. We are not like them called the Synod of Ulster; but we constitute a Presbyterian Synod in Ulster, within whose communion the present generation may hear the same gospel, and enjoy the same ordinances, with which their ancestors were privileged, in communion with the original Synod of Ulster. This is not only true of many congregations, but of every congregation in the Body; making allowance for such varieties in men and circumstances, as will always exist in an extended Church.

The various churches of the Reformation, though differing in the views which they exhibited of Church government and discipline, were agreed in their principles respecting the way of a sinner's acceptance with God. To illustrate this agreement, we might refer to the confessions of the early Protestant Churches,—the Augsburg,—the French,—the thirty-nine articles of the English Church.

These principles—usually termed the doctrines of grace—form the *true glory* of Protestantism; and, in the face of those who speak reproachfully of us, we firmly assert, that this glory, untarnished, still shines in the front of that profession, which our Church is steady in maintaining. As we are at present informed, we do not believe there is any Presbyterian Church, of equal extent with the Secession, in which there is the same complete agreement, in maintaining these great doctrines of the Reformation. Indeed, the Secession, and our respected brethren of the Covenanting Church, are the only Presbyterian bodies who exercise discipline, in such a way as to preserve uniformity and agreement in the religious principles held and taught in their respective connexions. Other bodies ought to know the manner in which Seceders and Covenanters support Orthodoxy in their Churches. We support it not only by having Orthodox ministers, elders, and members, in *some* congregations, but the rules applied to one congregation to preserve sound doctrine, are as certainly applied to every congregation in the connexion, for the same purpose. No member of either church is satisfied with a scriptural communion in the particular congregation to which he may belong, unless complete agreement respecting the great doctrines of the gospel be preserved in every congregation with which he holds communion. If it be sinful to continue under the instruction of an erroneous minister, or partake of the Lord's Supper at the same table with those who, in our judgment, are opposed to the gospel, then it is disobedience to our great Redemer to hold church communion with any minister, elder, or member, opposed to the faith and practice of the gospel. The minister who refuses to preach the gospel to his people, or substitutes other opinions for its doctrines, should be, and would be, excluded from our communion, or, in some instances, we would withdraw from him. This consistent, honest conduct, we believe a Saviour requires of his church. In accordance with this requirement, the Secession and Covenanting Churches have always acted.

Compare our principles with the aspect of various churches of the present day. There is an activity in the religious world, and its movement may be observed in different bodies. The men whose christian zeal is producing this activity, are, generally speaking,

Calvinists—our brethren in religious faith. They are bringing our principles into worldly respectability, and, what is far more important, are exhibiting the proper influence of these principles upon christian exertion. The time was, when in Ireland the open and proper support of our evangelical principles existed in a very limited degree beyond the boundaries of our own church; now they are maintained and exhibited by the zealous and reforming in different bodies. I well remember, in the days of my youth, to have heard a minister of the Synod of Ulster say of an Orthodox book which he had just been reading, “that his wife, though not very familiar with theological subjects, observed, at once, that it was like the books and sermons of Seceders, the one part contradicted the other.”

Such a misapprehension did exist not many years ago. It has partly passed away; and, by the change, a high compliment is paid to the principles of the Secession. In the Church of England, the men who are most active in labours of love, and in discharging faithfully the duties of a gospel minister, are the Evangelical clergy—who preach the doctrines of our Confession—or, which is the same, the Calvinistic articles of their own church. In the Church of Scotland, too, it was the principles maintained amongst us, which, of late years, were wielded by the mighty eloquence of Thomson and Chalmers; and these are considered Reformers. In the Synod of Ulster, also, Seceders rejoice to know, that many of the principles of our Church are loved, maintained, and defended by a goodly band both of ministers and people, distinguished as the Orthodox part of that body. The public ought to know, that the highest aim of the Orthodox, in other Presbyterian Churches, so far as religious faith is concerned, is to establish in their communions the same profession and uniformity which exist in the Secession.

The late Rev. Rowland Hill, in his *Journal of a Tour through Scotland*, complains, in severe terms, of what he calls the illiberality and bigotry of the Secession. He, however, does our Church justice, when speaking of its adherence to the doctrines of the gospel, in he says, “No set of men upon the earth have contended more earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints than the Seceders. Go wherever you will, into any Seceding place of worship, and you are sure to hear the gospel.”—*Journal*, page 124.

December 17, 1833.

T. K.

ON BAPTISM.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

HAVING seen in your Periodical some remarks on Baptism, I agree with what is said against the superstitious notions entertained by the ignorant about that ordinance; but some of the statements involve such sweeping charges, that I must take the liberty of animadverting a little upon them. Your correspondent seems to be afraid lest anything like *holy* should be attached to the external part of Baptism, and speaks with aversion of praying for a blessing upon so much of the element of water as is set apart, &c., and boldly asks “what is this but making holy water?” Now, suppose that I should

call it holy water, a *stiff* controversialist might defend my opinion. The water, in trial of jealousy, he would say, is called *holy*, Num. v. 17; "And the priest shall take *holy water*:" and is not the water in Baptism as much entitled to the same appellation? The anointing oil, and the sacrifices, and their residue to be eaten, are also called *holy*. These were figurative; so is the water in Baptism, and their nature was as little changed by their use as is that of the water in Baptism. But we say that prayer cannot make holy water, and that the Catholic priest does not make it by this means; and, therefore, we do not argue that it is holy by a change of its nature or an increase of its purity; but simply that its *use* is *holy*. I would ask, is the use of water in Baptism, the same as in washing my hands and my feet, and does water in the latter cases signify the same as it does in Baptism?—then there would be no difference between a divine ordinance and a human performance. This, I fear, would make Baptism a common thing; and it shows that to simplify too far may be dangerous. Your correspondent, however, manifestly considers Baptism to be an holy ordinance. If this be conceded, then, let any one try to separate the water and its use from Baptism, and see what he leaves behind.

The separation of any thing by divine appointment from a common to a sacred purpose makes its use *holy*; and this corresponds with the Hebrew and Greek words translated *holy*, in our version. To *sanctify*—set apart, or separate to sacred purposes, is their primitive meaning. If Christ hath not done this to the water in Baptism, he hath done nothing, and it ceases to be a divine ordinance. What does the water in Baptism signify? Christ's blood. And is not the *use* of what signifies such a precious thing *holy*; and is it not a duty to pray for a blessing upon it? Shall the duty and privilege of what sanctifies a common meal be interdicted with reference to this ordinance? 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5—"For every creature of God is good, &c., for it is *sanctified* by the word of God and prayer." Why should praying for a blessing upon so much of the element of water, &c. be called making holy water? It may be said that it is blessed already by the appointment, and so may our common meals; but prayer is the means by which we enjoy the blessing. Are not Baptism and the Lord's Supper, in many respects, the same? (Larger Catechism, Answer to Question 176,) "The author of both is God; the spiritual part of both is Christ and his benefits; both are seals of the same covenant." Now, why use prayer in administering the Lord's Supper, and not in Baptism? "The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ; the bread, which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. x. 16. It was the wine that is called the *Cup of Blessing*, and yet it was *blessed* by the Apostles. It may be said that we have example to guide us in the one case, and not in the other. To this we answer, that prayer is a duty so powerfully urged in the word of God, and of such general use in all the services of the Church, that the absence of example is no argument for rejecting it; for in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we are to make our requests known unto God; and if he hath promised his blessing, it is surely worth praying for. It might be said that we have no example of prayer before circumcision, and yet Ainsworth says, "This being a holy sign and seal, Abraham doubtless sanctified the work by

prayer, which custom all the Jews keep to this day." In the Directory for worship, composed by one hundred and five Divines, met at Westminster from England and Scotland, we have this rule to be observed at Baptism,—“This being done, prayer is also to be joined with the word of institution, for *sanctifying* the water to this *spiritual* use.”

The subject is not yet exhausted; for here is another statement on which I beg to offer a few remarks.—“Again, how often have I heard a parent addressed in some such language as the following when presenting his child, ‘as this child on account of its tender years, &c., is unable to make any profession of its faith, or come under any engagement, &c., you, its parent and sponsor, do promise *for it*, that you will train it up in the fear of the Lord,’ &c. Now, what absurdity and absolute nonsense is here! The parent is made to speak as the representative of the child—in its room and stead, and speaking in the person of the child, he virtually says, “I solemnly promise that I will train *myself* up in the fear of the Lord; that I will administer to *myself* the rod of correction.” This surely is a subject calling for animadversion on account of the singularity of the objections urged. The one-half of a criticism is to find a fault, the other half to mend it.

What does your correspondent mean when he uses the phrase, “*some such language?*” It cannot be the identical language which he heard. Again, what is the meaning of so many *et ceteras*? I wish the author were present to explain them. Passing by these things, however, I cannot perceive how “*promise for it*” could be metamorphosed into “train *myself*, and administer to *myself* the rod of correction?” This, if not a perversion, is certainly a play upon words; and the meaning is made out by the author’s own ingenuity. I would ask, therefore, what is the meaning of speaking in the person of the child, for in this transaction the child is the third person, and the parent is addressed in the second person, and he is made to speak for the child; and hence, by the author’s own showing, it cannot be *myself*. The grand mistake here is, that the objection supposes the parent to identify himself with the child, and therefore takes for granted that what he engages to do *for it*, he engages to do for and to himself. But the sense of mankind hath universally determined that even a representative is a person different from those whom he represents, and that he is bound by his office to act *for them*, and not *for himself*; and whenever he does the latter, the representation ceases, and he either represents himself, which is impossible, or puts an extinguisher upon his office; and therefore the objection, urged with so much parade, about the parent and child seems to me to destroy itself.

I conclude by entreating your correspondent when he appears again in public, to speak in *softer strains*, and not to level charges against all without exception. Elijah did this, and complained, “I am left alone;” &c. but God could give him the precise amount of those that were on His side. When we calculate as He did, O! that we may ever be mistaken as he was. W. C.

We are of opinion that the points of difference between our respected Correspondents, A. and W. C., are more in appearance than in reality; and that a little explanation may prove satisfactory to both parties. Our friend A. does not utter a

syllable against prayer for the divine blessing upon the ordinance of baptism, as W. C. seems to have taken for granted. On the contrary, we feel persuaded that upon this point they are agreed. W. C. will also perceive that, according to his own explanations, the divine blessing respects not so much the *element* of water, as its *use* in the washing of Baptism, in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We supplicate for the blessing of God upon the ordinance in its administration, and with reference to the great objects it was intended to accomplish.

Turning to the second point of difference, we beg to state, that both of our Correspondents admit that the parent takes upon him solemn obligations to God when he stands forward to have Baptism administered to his child, and that he has important duties to perform in training it up for God. There is some ambiguity in the use of the word *for*, which may lead to misunderstanding. The parent is certainly bound, as he values his own soul, and the soul of his child, to instruct it in the truth, by precept and example, and to use every scriptural means of making it savingly acquainted with Jesus Christ.

Should either of our Correspondents favour us with an article on the subject viewed in its general merits, and divested of controversy, we shall feel great pleasure in giving it insertion.—*Edit.*

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Duty of Prayer Illustrated and Recommended from Scripture, and from the Opinions and Conduct of Uninspired Persons; with Forms of Prayer for the use of Families and Individuals, by the REV. ALEXANDER WHYTE, A.M., Minister of Fettercairn. Pp. 401, 12mo. OLIPHANT AND SON, Edinburgh. Sold by HUGH REA, 17, Waring-street, Belfast.

THIS volume is fresh from the press. The title page will give the reader a pretty accurate idea of its contents. He will expect the work to be mainly of a devotional and practical character, and his expectation will not be disappointed. If there be disappointment at all, it will result from discovering that the author has in reality done more than he promised, and that more labour has been expended, and more research applied, than many are disposed to consider necessary in treating such a subject.

We perfectly agree with Mr. Whyte, when he expresses his conviction, that "if people could be prevailed upon to pray, this would be the shortest and surest way of overcoming their dislike to religion, and bringing them to Christ for salvation; and that it is the duty of every one, whatever be his place in Society, to use all the means in his power, both to cultivate devotional habits in himself, and to urge others to do the same." This object he has kept before him in

every page of the work, and certainly if it shall not be in some considerable measure attained, the blame will attach to the christian public.

The author's plan is simple and beautiful, and he has stated it with great conciseness. "In the following attempt to plead the cause of piety, it is proposed in humble dependance on the divine blessing, to inquire, What is prayer, and to whom we are to offer it? Why we should pray? For what we should pray? and, How we should pray? By what means we may learn to pray if yet prayerless; or improve in it, if we have already learned? What are the most common pretences, and the real causes for neglecting prayer?"

Each of these questions is taken up separately, and in the discussion, Scripture testimony is judiciously employed, together with an immense mass of valuable information from the writings of "uninspired persons." The superiority of religion over infidelity, both in theory and practice, is well illustrated; not only from a comparison of the lives and characters of those who support these respective systems, but also from the recorded confessions of many of the most powerful and virulent adversaries of Christianity. In this department, the author has rendered good service to the cause of our holy faith. We are, in fact, greatly in love with his labours; chiefly because they furnish an admirable specimen of blending the *didactic* with the *devotional*, in such a way as to instruct the understanding, elevate the affections, and humble the soul in the presence of its God.

The forms of prayer which the author has furnished, will be differently estimated according to the views and habits of those into whose hands the book may fall. But whatever opinion may be entertained respecting them, we wish this volume extensive dissemination and perusal. Breathing a spirit of enlightened and evangelical piety, it rebukes the infidel and nominal christian, and encourages all who know God, to cherish more and more that intercourse with heaven which is the life of the soul.

D.

INTELLIGENCE.

ORDINATIONS.

On Wednesday the 25th September, the Presbytery of Tyrone ordained to the pastoral charge of Castlecaulfield Congregation, Rev. Jos. Acheson, Licentiate of the Markethill Presbytery. The morning services were conducted by the Rev. A. Wilson, who preached a very appropriate sermon on Romans x. 15; the Moderator of the Presbyterian Secession Synod ordained, and delivered a suitable address, solemnly urging the Minister and people faithfully to discharge their respective duties. In the evening, the Rev. S. M'Curdy clearly illustrated, and impressively applied, the language of Heb. xiii. 17. The Presbytery and many other friends were entertained afterwards by the Congregation, and the evening was employed in a manner becoming the solemn and interesting occasion.

On Tuesday the 24th September, the Rev. Thomas Lowry was ordained to the pastoral office in the Presbyterian Secession Congregation of Glenhoy, by the Presbytery of Tyrone.

CALLS.

REV. John Weir, a Licentiate of the Presbytery of Armagh, has accepted a call to the pastoral charge of the Presbyterian Secession Congregation of Newry, under the inspection of the Presbytery of Markethill.

REV. Joseph Weir Hunter, son of Rev. J. Hunter, Coleraine, a Licentiate of the Presbytery of Belfast, has accepted a call to the pastoral charge of the Congregation of Abury, under the Presbytery of Markethill.

REV. James Rogers, of the Presbytery of Down, has received two calls; one from the Congregation of Glascar, as assistant and successor to his worthy father, the Rev. John Rogers; the other from the Congregation of Castleblaney, under the care of the Presbytery of Monaghan.

REV. John Edmonds has accepted a call to the pastoral charge of the Congregation of Sandholes, near Cookstown, under the inspection of the Presbytery of Tyrone.

DEATH.

DIED, at Monaghan, of Cholera, on the 4th of November, in the 70th year of his age, Mr. John Gass, a ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Secession Congregation of Monaghan. The manner of his life witnessed to the world the presence and the power of godliness within him. His cheerful and contented disposition, the candour, integrity, and friendship, for which he was so remarkable, endeared him to an extensive acquaintance. His fellow-worshippers gratefully remember the anxious interest he felt in whatever concerned their congregation; with his ready and persevering exertion to effect that which he believed would promote its prosperity. A gracious God preserved his servant in peace of mind—patient under the trying disease by which he was assailed, and after a few hours of suffering removed him into that place where there shall be no more death, neither shall there be any more pain. What matter of thankfulness that such expectation is thus warranted! “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.”

THE RELIGIOUS ADVOCATE.

A new Periodical has issued from the Belfast Press, called the *Religious Advocate and Christian Monitor*. The Editor has, in his first number, made most liberal proposals to a number of our excellent public charities. He engages also to give to the amount of upwards of sixty pounds from the profits of the periodical for the support of religious objects without regard to difference of sentiment among evangelical denominations. There is certainly an attractive novelty and generosity about such a proposal, calculated to create an interest in the Publication and its Editor. Our wish is that he may succeed in the benevolent design of effecting much good for the cause of religion and philanthropy.

Wilson, Printer, 70, High-street, Belfast.